

Using Dialectical Journals for Assessment of Music Teacher Development

Best Practices Session

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Ann M. Porter

University of Cincinnati

College-Conservatory of Music

porteram@ucmail.uc.edu

The Convergence of Several Learning Constructs

- Observation
- Modeling
- Case Studies
- Reflective Practice
- Content Knowledge
- Critical Thinking
- Dialectical Journals



Consider the Case of “Bob”

LESSON PLANNING

Mr./Ms. BOB

DATE: 4/23/07

CLASS: Beginning Band

LENGTH: 15 minute mini-lesson

OBJECTIVE: *The students will...*

CONCEPTS:

SEQUENCE:

- 1) Greet the Class
- 2) Warm-up: Students will play the F Concert Scale, one octave, ascending and descending in quarter notes

- What’s wrong with this lesson plan?
- Lack of evidence of content knowledge
- No evidence of critical thinking skills

Consider the Case of “Barb”

Reflection

Lesson from 2/7/05

Upon watching the video the first thing that I thought of was that I need to have better posture, find something else to do with my hair and lose some weight. Oh, and I’m starting to do some things just like my mother.

- What’s wrong with this reflection?
- Lack of evidence of content knowledge
- No evidence of critical thinking skills

What are Dialectical Journals?

- Used in Literature Classrooms
- Elicits a specific kind of thinking in response to written or orally presented material
- Provides focus and format for recording responses to a text
- Can be a methodical training format for improving thinking skills

Different Types of Dialectical Journals

- Interpretation Journal
 - ☐ What it says
 - ☐ What it means
 - ☐ What it means to me

Different Types of Dialectical Journals

Interpretation Journal (Social Studies Text)

What it says	What it means	What it means to me
<p>“A trip isn’t migration. Migration is a permanent move, not a short-term one.”</p>	<p>Migration is when people or animals go to a new place and stay there.</p>	<p>When my family went to Wisconsin for a month, that was a trip. When my friend moved from Germany to California, that was migration.</p>

Different Types of Dialectical Journals

Character Analysis Journal (Literature Text)

What it says	What it means	What it tells about the character
“ ‘Not I,’ said the dog.”	The dog wouldn't help the little red hen.	The dog was lazy and mean because he wouldn't help the little red hen.

Other Types of Dialectical Journals

- Application Journal (Science Text)
- Problem-solution Journal (Math Text)
- Journals for Metacognition (record the thinking processes that occur while students take in new information)
 - Learning Log (Science Film)
 - Note-taking/note-making Journal

What Would a Dialectical Journal for Music Teacher Education Contain?

- Live time or video-taped, expert teacher model for observation (or could be used with self-observation)
- Time Sequence
- Framework for Teacher Reflection and Decision Making (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993), derived from Shulman (1987)
 - ▣ Content
 - ▣ Pedagogy
 - ▣ Students/Context

Dialectical Journal for Music Teacher Education

	Content	Pedagogy	Students/ Context
Time Sequence	Teaching Strategies	Foundations Why?	Goals/ Changes/ Thoughts
2:20 pm	Breathing Exercises: in for 4, out for 8, 12, 16, etc.	To focus on endurance and breath support	Breathing exercises also allows for students to focus



Preliminary Study

- Participants were (N=11) Instrumental Music Graduate Students, with either a band or orchestral background
- Participants were enrolled in a Summer Masters in Music Education Program and most had 3-5 years of teaching experience
- After a brief introduction to the technique, participants used the Dialectical Journals for (3) 20-minute observations of a model teacher conducting a middle school summer camp band, and (1) 20-minute sectional observation



Preliminary Study

- Participants completed one of the three large group observations comparing reliability with a classmate
- Dialectical Journals were submitted to the faculty instructor for grading purposes
- Data was collected and coded by the researcher

Results

- Participants were able to correctly identify 48 different Teaching Strategies (Music Content Knowledge)
- Identified most often were episodes of teacher modeling (31), breathing exercises (15), following the conductor game (13), whole-part-whole rehearsing (10), student chanting/clapping/counting rhythms (9), students sharing listening observations/w teacher feedback (8), and tuning (8).

Results

- 33 of the teaching strategies were identified by more than one participant
- Participants misidentified 6 different teaching strategies (not content specific, fall into Shulman's pedagogy of teaching category)
- PT strategies observed: approval to appropriate (14), using a pencil to reinforce marking music (2), proximity changes (1), challenging students (1), good eye contact (1), using student names (1).

Results

- All Teaching Strategies had appropriate Pedagogical Foundations (participants seemed to understand why a particular teaching strategy was being used, though some explanations were at the most basic level).
- Largest variability was in the Goals/Changes/Thoughts or knowledge related to students and context.

Results

- Journal entries for Students/Context were coded using the Fuller & Brown (1975) Stages of Concern for new teachers
- Three Stages:
 - ▣ Self (SE)
 - ▣ Subject Matter (SU)
 - ▣ Students (ST)
- Hybrid Stages:
 - ▣ SE/SU
 - ▣ SU/ST

Results

- Stages of Concern:
 - 75 Students (ST)
 - 69 Subject Matter/Students (SU/ST)
 - 55 Subject Matter (SU)
 - 28 Self/Subject Matter (SE/SU)
 - 20 Self (SE)

Discussion

- The fairly large number of Self (SE) and Self/Subject Matter (SE/SU) is a bit unexpected
- May be due to personal insecurities, stress of re-entering school setting, desire to self-assure, familiarity with teaching strategies observed

Discussion

- Content Knowledge and Pedagogy of Teaching Knowledge are intertwined in our thinking about teaching
- Experienced teachers can readily identify teaching strategies and the pedagogy underlying them and can think critically about their own use of certain strategies and the relative successfulness of strategies related to student outcomes

Questions?

- Is it important for new teachers to know the difference between content knowledge and pedagogy of teaching knowledge?
- Would knowing where you were re: the Stages of Concern help you move to a different stage?
- Is it possible to get stuck in a Stage-- particularly the Self Stage?

More Questions?

- Can undergraduates identify content teaching strategies and underlying pedagogy as readily as experienced teachers?
- Will using Dialectical Journals promote deeper levels of Content Knowledge and foster critical thinking skills?

Thoughts for the Day

- “He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches.”—George Bernard Shaw
- “Those who can, do. Those who understand, teach.”—Lee Shulman
- “Those who understand teaching are geniuses.”—Ann Porter